

ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

LAST SURVIVORS: THE NATURAL HISTORY OF ANIMALS IN DANGER OF EXTINCTION. By Noel P. Simon and Paul G eroudet. Illustrated by Helmut Diller and Paul Barruel. The World Publishing Co., New York, 1970: 8½ × 10¼ in., 276 pp., 44 col. pls., 31 text figs., 6 maps. \$19.95.

This is another handsome "Christmas present" nature book, but a particularly attractive and useful one, which will no doubt help the cause of animal preservation and promote interest among a wide range of readers.

It is the well-documented story of 36 species of mammals and 12 of birds, the existence of which is threatened at present. They can, however, still be saved from extinction if adequate measures are promptly taken. Let us hope they will be!

The birds, which have been chosen at random, so it seems, are extensively and carefully studied by the veteran French Swiss ornithologist Paul G eroudet and faithfully depicted by Paul Barruel, the well-known French bird artist, two highly reliable naturalists. The 12 species mentioned are: for America, the Galapagos Penguin, the California Condor, the Whooping Crane, Atwater's Prairie Chicken and Kirtland's Warbler; for Europe, the Imperial Eagle and Audouin's Gull; for Asia, the Brown-eared Pheasant, the Japanese Crested Ibis, and the Philippine Monkey-eating Eagle; for Africa and Madagascar, the Long-tailed Ground Roller; for Oceania, the Kakapo.

One cannot help regretting that no more of the threatened species have been considered. There is certainly no shortage of threatened birds today. It would no doubt be highly beneficial to the cause of bird preservation if other such studies were soon made available to the general public.

The work is prefaced by H. R. H. Prince Bernhardt of the Netherlands, President of the World Wildlife Fund.—JEAN DELACOUR

BIRDS OF GUATEMALA. By Hugh C. Land. Livingston Publishing Co., Wynnewood, Pennsylvania. 1970: 7½ × 5 in., xvi + 381 pp., 5 maps, 44 col. pls. by Land and Wayne Trimm. \$10.00.

The publication of the "Birds of Guatemala" by the late Hugh Land marks the appearance of the first comprehensive, illustrated, field guide book covering an entire Central American republic. But it is much more than a standard field guide, containing a wealth of condensed information on many aspects of Guatemalan ornithology, the result of a (tragically short) lifetime's dedication spanning a decade of field research. Indeed, I am continually surprised at the quantity of material presented in this book while retaining its size along the lines of many modern field guides (meaning it will not *quite* fit in one's pocket). It is comparable in size to Smithe's "Birds of Tikal," the only other field guide presently available for northern Central America, but of course covers a much greater geographical area with a far greater diversity of species.

The introductory section of the book contains discussions of geography, climate, life zones, and ornithological history of the Republic; the life zones (Holdridge system) are treated in some detail, with an accompanying map and zonal breakdown of characteristic species.

The main body of the text is devoted to the species accounts. Each family is introduced by a very brief general paragraph relating distribution of the group overall and number of species occurring in Guatemala, as well as zonal patterns of occurrence in the Republic